

Determining Product Eligibility for Purchase with SNAP Benefits

In general, items that are not eligible for purchase with Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (formerly Food Stamp Program) benefits include:

- Food products that contain alcohol or tobacco products
- Items that are not intended for human consumption (e.g. paper products, pet foods, etc.)
- Foods sold hot at the point-of-sale, and
- Vitamins and supplements

When considering the eligibility of vitamins and supplements, power bars, energy drinks and other branded products, the primary determinant is the type of product label chosen by the manufacturer to conform to Food and Drug Administration (FDA) guidelines:

- Items that carry a nutrition facts label are eligible foods
- Items that carry a supplement facts label are classified by the FDA as supplements, and are therefore *not* eligible.

The Food and Nutrition Service does *not* have authority to determine whether branded products have been appropriately labeled as supplements and cannot answer inquiries relative to why particular branded products carry a supplement facts label. Such questions/concerns must be directed to the product manufacturer. Product manufacturers label their products based on Food and Drug Administration (FDA) labeling guidelines and are in the best position to provide labeling rationale.

Please follow the guidance above to determine whether a specific branded product is eligible.

The FNS – SNAP posted list of determinations is now limited to generic (non-brand specific) products.

To request determinations on generic items, or brand- specific items that do not have a nutrition or supplement facts label, please submit by mail or email a complete product package or sample of the item(s) to:

Chief
Retailer Management and Issuance Branch
Benefit Redemption Division
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
USDA, Food and Nutrition Service
3101 Park Center Drive, Room 404
Alexandria, VA 22302
OR EMAIL TO:
BRDHQ-WEB@fns.usda.gov

All requests for determinations submitted with complete product packaging will be completed within 10 business days.